

**Virginia Latino Advisory Board Meeting
Friday, December 13th – 8:41 a.m.
Pohick Regional Library
6450 Sydenstricker Rd, Burke, VA 22015**

Minutes

In Attendance: Cecilia Barbosa (Chair), Karina Kline-Gabel (Vice-Chair), Paul Berry (Secretary), Edgar Aranda-Yanoc, Diana Brown, Damien Cabezas, Melody Gonzales, Alex Guzman, Michael Martinez, Aida Pacheco, Sergio Rimola, Gloria Pena Rockhold, Carmen Romero, Vivian Sanchez Jones, Walewska Watkins, Cecilia Williams, Jorge Yinat

Not in Attendance: Manuel Leiva (Excused), Juan Espinoza (Excused), Eugene Chigna (Excused), Rodrigo Velasquez (Excused)

Guests: Dr. Rebecca Vargas-Jackson; Roberto Quiñones, Hon. Walter Tejada, Luis Aguilar, Monica Sarmiento, Margie Del Castillo, Senator Dave Marsden

Staff & Counsel: Maribel Castañeda, Director of Appointments and Director of Latino Outreach; Danielle Campbell, Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administration; Justin Bell, Assistant Attorney General

Call to Order 8:41 a.m.

Cecilia Barbosa asked the guests to introduce themselves as well as the two new VLAB appointees, Diana Brown and Walewska Watkins. Cecilia Barbosa called the meeting formally to order when a quorum was met.

Community Updates 8:50 a.m.

Aida Pacheco announced that there was a Census 2020 meeting in Richmond and there are others planned in 2020 to inform the public of the Census and to act as informational outreach events.

Approval of Minutes 8:57 a.m.

Gloria Peña Rockhold made a motion to modify the October meeting minutes to include the word “Excused” where appropriate, in reference to absences, to indicate when Board members are appropriately adhering to Board attendance policies. Diana Brown seconded. All board members present were in favor, with no abstentions.

Motion: Michael Martinez made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Karina Kline-Gabel seconded. All members present were in favor, with no abstentions.

Motion: Alex Guzman then made a motion to approve the meeting agenda, with Melody Gonzales seconding. All members present were in favor, with no abstentions.

Public Commentary 9:05 a.m.

Cecilia Barbosa asked whether there were public comments. Roberto Quiñones suggested that VLAB allow members of the public to offer commentary via virtual means when they are not able to physically attend VLAB meetings.

Administration Update 9:07 a.m.

Danielle Campbell gave updates from the Governor's office.

Budget: The Governor has announced his proposed budget, to include additional initiatives as follows:

- Maternal and infant mortality prevention services - \$22 million
- Early Childhood Education programs - \$94.8 million
- A new community college initiative - \$148 million in seed money
- A Commerce and Trade announcement was scheduled for later in the day on December 13th
- An announcement on K-12 funding increases was scheduled to be presented publicly on Monday, December 16th

The Governor continues to work with current and incoming elected officials on the budget as the 2020 legislative session approaches.

Latino Outreach Update from Maribel Castañeda 9:15 a.m.

The Latinx Summit held in October was a great success – attendees noted the relevancy and timeliness of panel topics. Several board members participated.

In October Maribel Castañeda met with stakeholders in the Latino community and has been attending community events to connect with Latino community leaders. She also participated in the Central VA Census workshop and took part in the planning discussion for the rollout of Latino community interaction and engagement.

For gubernatorial board appointments, 1 out of 53 applications were Latino in October. In November, 4 of 52 applications were Latino.

Maribel Castañeda continues to engage stakeholders in the Executive branch in VLAB proceedings and work with the secretariats on ongoing VLAB priorities.

VLAB Annual Report & Addendum Update 9:22 a.m.

Maribel Castañeda and Danielle Campbell updated the Board on the status of VLAB's 2019 recommendations to the Governor (see Board handout for a summary of their presentation)..

Motion: Aida Pacheco made a motion to send a letter to the Governor urging him to fill the vacancy in the administration for the post of Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Michael Martinez seconded the motion.

Discussion: Cecilia Barbosa reported on a meeting of the chairs of VLAB, the African American Advisory Board (VAAAB), the Asian American Advisory Board (VAAB), and the Virginia Council on Women at which Dr. Underwood offered insight on the wider strategic plan for diversity and inclusion in the administration.

Vote: All present were in favor, with the exception of one abstention (Alex Guzman)

2020 Census Update 9:50 a.m.

Aida Pacheco reported on the successful census community event held in Richmond in October. There are more events scheduled for 2020. There were about 30 participants. The regional census representative gave a detailed presentation on the census and participants offered insight and suggestions on outreach to the Latinx communities. Another focus of the event was the ongoing hiring process for census positions in Virginia.

VLAB Outreach Discussion 10:08 a.m.

Karina Kline-Gabel and Melody Gonzales led a discussion on the ways that VLAB can structure meetings and town halls to better engage the community and leverage the abilities of VLAB members to conduct outreach within their respective communities. There is a consensus that continuous community outreach by VLAB is essential to receive input from and to advance the goals of the Latino community.

For example, over the summer of 2019 Karina Kline-Gabel reached out to heads of organizations in the Harrisonburg region to discuss growth of Latino-owned businesses, as well as to establish an organic list of Latino organizations in the area.

Melody Gonzales proposed development of a VLAB toolkit for public engagement that could include the following topics:

- Small focus groups by VLAB members in their communities
- Protocols for publicizing meetings
- Social media guidelines
- Asking administration staff to be involved in board meetings
- Inviting community members to the meetings

A related project is collecting knowledge about communities through research conducted by members of VLAB. Formalizing research standards was briefly discussed.

Motion: Karina Kline-Gabel made a motion to create a toolkit to help VLAB members with outreach. Sergio Rimola seconded.

During the discussion Carmen Romero added that there should be a PowerPoint explaining what VLAB is, the state of the Latino community in Virginia, and highest policy priorities.

All present voted in favor, with no abstentions.

Remarks from Senator Dave Marsden 10:25 a.m.

Senator Marsden gave broad remarks to the board about the legislative agenda for the 2020 General Assembly session as well as presenting arguments around driving privilege cards versus drivers' licenses.

Panel Discussion: Latinx Policy Priorities 10:40 a.m.

The board was joined by four distinguished panelists:

- Monica Sarmiento, Executive Director, Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights (VACIR)
- Margie Del Castillo, State Committee Chair, Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights (VACIR)
- Luis Aguilar, Virginia State Director, CASA
- Walter Tejada, President, Virginia Latino Leaders Council (VLLC)
- Edgar Aranda, President, Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations (VACOLAO)

All panelists described their organizational goals, their policy priorities, and their legislative focus during the 2020 General Assembly session. Much of the discussion between the panelists and the board concentrated on the importance of recommending drivers' licenses for all rather than driving privilege cards, due to the recent introduction of Real ID and the protection of privacy.

Priorities of the VLLC include access to drivers' licenses for all residents; in-state tuition for Dreamers; improving Latino college recruitment; addressing wage theft; creation of an Office of Immigrant Services; recruitment of Latinx career professionals at top levels of the administration; addressing racism and white privilege; increasing affordable housing and preventing eviction; eliminating roadblocks for Latinx businesses to State procurement; and addressing issues of migrant farm workers.

Priorities of CASA include drivers' licenses for all residents, in-state college tuition for all Virginia residents, advocating for livable wages, and establishment of an Office of Immigrant Services.

VACIR's top priority is promoting driver's licenses for all Virginia residents. Their emphasis was on the benefit of advocating for drivers' licenses for the protection of privacy. Privilege cards do not achieve the same elevated level of protection as licenses. Another priority is in-state college tuition for all Virginia residents.

Announcement of VLAB Award Winners 11:55 a.m.

Karina Kline-Gabel announced that Alexander Cintron and Fanny Smedile received the VLAB 2019 Latinx Leadership Awards.

Working Lunch and Committee Meetings 12:07 p.m.

Committee Reports (recommendations and discussion topics) 1:19 p.m.

Health Committee

The Health Committee commended the Governor's proposal to expand maternal and infant health support and funding. Health Committee members also recommended allowing mothers with undocumented residency status who are income-eligible for Medicaid to receive prenatal care.¹

Motion: Sergio Rimola made a motion to recommend that a full-time bilingual worker be hired at DMAS to accommodate the needs of all communities seeking assistance through the recently expanded Medicaid program. Aida Pacheco seconded the motion. All board members present were in favor, with no abstentions.

Education

Melody Gonzales expressed an interest in working with the staff of the Secretary of Education to understand budget priorities for the biennial budget proposed by Governor Northam. She discussed the importance of establishing a baseline understanding on the number of bilingual school counselors working in public schools; adding additional financial support to facilitate universal in-state tuition; and advocacy strategies outside of legislation aimed at immigrant students in order to encourage college application and attendance.

Melody Gonzales made a motion recommending the increase of bilingual staff and educators in the public-school system. Aida Pacheco seconded the motion. All present voted in favor, with no abstentions.

¹ This recommendation was approved by VLAB at its October 2019 meeting.

Business

The Business Committee focused on the previous discussion of SWAM procurement and Driver's Licenses for Virginia residents.

Motion: Jorge Yinat made a motion to amend the language in the VLAB 2019 policy recommendations to replace any reference to privilege cards with "driver's license". Alex Guzman seconded the motion. All present voted in favor with no abstentions.

Motion: Edgar Aranda made a motion to write Dr. Underwood a letter outlining the recommendations of VLAB on driver's licenses. Jorge Yinat seconded the motion. All present voted in favor with no abstentions.

Civic engagement

Karina Kline-Gabel stated that the Committee's discussion focused on filling the vacant position of Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This is a permanent position that needs to be filled. Next, Karina Kline-Gabel discussed outreach to other advisory boards who may be interested in co-hosting a youth summit with VLAB and the ongoing development of a strategic plan for civic engagement.

Housing

The Housing Committee discussed the announcement made by the Governor earlier in the day for a \$92 million increase for affordable housing in the biennial budget. This exceeded the original recommendation by VLAB of \$20 million. Further recommendations will be submitted in writing prior to the next meeting and made available with the meeting minutes.

Discussion: Elections and Upcoming Meetings

Danielle Campbell announced that elections for VLAB Officer positions would take place during the first meeting of 2020 and that an email containing instructions and a request for nominations would be distributed in January.

She also presented proposed meeting dates for 2020 as follows: Friday, February 21st; Friday, June 12th; Friday, October 2nd; and Friday, December 18th. She asked that she be notified of any conflict. Board members voiced concerns regarding the Friday, February 21st and December 18th date.

Final Comments 1:55 p.m.

Danielle Campbell announced she would follow up with proposed VLAB meeting dates and locations. Additionally, she announced that a STEM competition is currently underway and accepting applications.

Cecilia Barbosa informed the Board that a year-end self-evaluation tool will be made available to VLAB members for their comments, observations, and recommendations for improvement of VLAB.

Adjournment Cecilia Barbosa adjourned the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

The next VLAB meeting has been scheduled for February 28th in Richmond, VA (please note this date was set after the meeting concluded when these minutes were finalized)